What are some obstacles in engaging parents?
“Working With Your Students’ First Teacher”

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Overview

Part I: The Impact of Trauma
Part II: The Sociology of Parenting
Part III: Parenting: What Works
Part I: The Impact of Trauma
Trauma Unit consult...

- Three unrestrained children in MVC
- Mom was the driver
- 9yo, 8yo admitted to floor for observation
- 2yo admitted to PICU for observation
- Mom admitted to Trauma with lacerations of her neck and wrists
“From the mouths of babes...”

- 9yo says “my momma was mad ‘cause our daddy cheated on her.”
- “We were on the way to granny’s house when momma told us to unbuckle our seatbelts, she was driving fast and then we crashed.”
- “The police had to break the window cause momma had a knife and cut her neck and arms.”
Further history from MGM

- Parents together for 12 years
- Chronic history of DV
- Previous order of protection with multiple separations
- 2yo receiving early intervention services for significant developmental delays
Physical exam of 8yo
“Conventional ACEs”

ABUSE
1. Physical
2. Emotional
3. Sexual

NEGLECT
4. Physical
5. Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION
6. Domestic violence
7. Substance abuse
8. Mental illness
9. Parental
divorce/separation
10. Household member incarcerated
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

DEMOGRAPHICS:
Student Name: ___________________________ ID#: ___________________________
Gender: ☐ M or ☐ F Date of Birth: ___________________________
Room #, grade: __________________________ Date of Request: __________________________
Requested By (name & title): __________________________
Primary Caregiver(s) Name(s): __________________________ Relation to Student: __________________________
Student Street Address: __________________________ Zip: 606 * ☐ I have or ☐ have not notified student's caregiver of this referral*

ACADEMIC PROFILE:
Current Overall Academic Performance: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ F Is this student in SBPS: ☐ Y or ☐ N (if so, please circle): TIER I II III
Number of Absences this school year: __________________________
Number of Tardies this school year: __________________________
Academic interventions used: __________________________

STUDENT STRENGTHS:
☐ Tries Hard ☐ Pays Attention ☐ Good/Average Peer Relationships ☐ Uses Good Manners ☐ Follows Teacher Directives ☐ Acts Respectfully ☐ Turns in Homework ☐ Acts Helpfully

DESCRIPTORS OF BEHAVIORAL PROFILE CHECKLIST: (Indicate all behaviors that are currently exhibited):
☐ Verbally disruptive to class (V) ☐ Hyper Active (H) ☐ Anxious Behavior (worried, looks nervous) (A)
☐ Fighting/Physically Aggressive (F) ☐ Sexual Behavior (S) ☐ Depressed Behavior (crying, lethargic) (D)
☐ Self-Injurious Behavior (SI) ☐ Bullying/Intimidation (B) ☐ Lack of Self Control (L)
☐ School Phobia/Truancy (SP) ☐ Refuse to Comply with Directives (R) ☐ Gang Activity (G)
☐ Withdrawal (head down, not talking) (W) ☐ Lack of Motivation (M) ☐ other

*Please use code letter to indicate how long behaviors have occurred and how often they occur (per day, per class period): (e.g. X started 9/3 2X/day)

OTHER CURRENT RISK FACTORS (In student's environment):
☐ Substance Abuse ☐ Mental Illness ☐ Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Limited Family Support ☐ Homelessness

INTERVENTIONS IMPLEMENTED:
☐ Positive Behavior Supports ☐ Leadership/Helper Tasks ☐ Social-Emotional Learning/Character Ed ☐ Redirection
☐ Proximity Seating

*What were the results of the interventions: Work for a short period, but student still has difficulties with self-control on a daily basis.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Hx. of Early Intervention services.
“The acute effect of local homicides on children’s cognitive performance”*

- Demonstrated lower test scores in children who lived within the block group of a homicide that occurred in the previous seven days.
- Difficulty concentrating for a period of 2 days-1 month after the stressor.

*determined by data from the Census Bureau to divide up a neighborhood, generally includes 600-3,000 people.

“Association between neighborhood violence & biological stress in children”*

Cortisol levels and telomere length were negatively affected by:

- Density of liquor/convenience stores
- Domestic violence
- Violent crime

*Kathleen N. Sigman, MD, et al. JAMA
“Expanded ACEs”

- Peer victimization, peer isolation/rejection, and community violence exposure contributed significantly to mental health symptoms*
- Poverty was a strong predictor of physical health problems*
- Other studies have demonstrated the relationship between racial discrimination and being in foster care


How are the expanded ACEs (community violence, poverty, racism) impacting the students you serve? Parents you serve?
“FIGHT OR FLIGHT”
A Healthy Nervous System

arousal-activation  sympathetic  settle  parasympathetic

Normal Range
The two part function of the nervous system...

**Sympathetic**

**Parasympathetic**
Symptoms of Un-Discharged Traumatic Stress

Traumatic Event

Normal Range

Stuck on “On”

Anxiety, Panic, Hyperactivity
Exaggerated Startle
Inability to relax, Restlessness
Hyper-vigilance, Digestive problems
Emotional flooding
Chronic pain, Sleeplessness
Hostility/rage

Stuck on “Off”

Depression, Flat affect
Lethargy, Deadness
Exhaustion, Chronic Fatigue
Disorientation
Disconnection, Dissociation
Complex syndromes, Pain
Low Blood Pressure
Poor digestion
Facial Recognition in Abused Children

Conclusions:
1) Physically abused children overestimated facial expressions as “angry”
2) Neglected children had difficulty distinguishing sad from fearful and angry faces
“TOXIC STRESS”

“The excessive or prolonged activation of the physiologic stress response systems in the absence of the buffering protection afforded by stable, responsive relationships.”

--The American Academy of Pediatrics
OLDER CHILDREN - High School Sophomores and Seniors

Washington School Classroom (30 Students)
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

- 6 students with no ACE
- 5 students with 1 ACE
- 6 students with 2 ACEs
- 3 students with 3 ACEs
- 7 students with 4 or 5 ACEs
- 3 students with 6 or more ACEs

- 58% (17) students with no exposure to physical abuse or adult to adult violence
- 29% (9) of students exposed to physical abuse or adult to adult violence
- 13% (4) of students exposed to physical abuse and adult to adult violence

Population Average

Slide courtesy of the Family Policy Council
“Unsafe at home means unwelcome in school.”

-Laura Porter
ACEs/Toxic Stress disrupt the development of...

1. Social connections
2. Emotional regulation skills
The long term impact of trauma

1. Traumatized children will challenge caring adults in their lives.
2. They come with negative beliefs about themselves.
   (worthlessness & powerlessness)
3. They come with negative beliefs about the adults in their lives.
   (unreliable & rejecting)
4. They reenact the familiar.
5. They need adults that will reassure them that they are safe, capable, and worthwhile...over and over...
6. They need to know that you are available, reliable and responsive...over and over...

The AAP Toxic Stress Toolkit
Part II: The Sociology of Parenting
Special issue paper

Human evolution and culture in relationship to shame in the parenting role: Implications for psychology and psychotherapy

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WHAT'S THE OPPOSITE OF SELF-RELIANCE?

dependence, reliance, inability, inaptitude, stupidity, helplessness, impotency, inadequacy, weakness
Competitive Parenting...

My child is better than your child at everything, every time, everywhere. Forever.

Sincerely,
Momma One-Upper
The Zero-to-Three Study (2015)

Almost All Parents Feel Judged, Almost All the Time

Moms are more likely to feel judged than dads are, with one important exception: Dads feel more judged by their co-parents than moms do.

- 90% of moms and 85% of dads feel judged. 46% of moms and 45% of dads say they feel judged all the time or nearly all the time.
The role of SHAME in parenting
Shame and Compassion

Limbic system = Alarm

Frontal lobe = Executive Functioning

Shame and Compassion
Adverse Childhood Experiences:
Shame vs. Compassion
Household Dysfunction
Incarcerated family member
Self-compassion...

WHAT IS SELF-COMPASSION?

Mindfulness
Self-compassion involves recognising when we're stressed or struggling without being judgmental or over-reacting.

Self-Kindness
Being supportive and understanding towards ourselves when we're having a hard time, rather than being harshly self-critical.

Connectedness
Remembering that everyone makes mistakes and experiences difficulties at times. We are not alone!
What can you/school do to support parents; taking into consideration the shame they carry and their need to learn about self compassion?
EPIGENETICS
Potential for targeted epigenetic interventions to mitigate the impact of ACEs and reduce rates of psychopathology, substance dependence and chronic illness.
“Effects of prenatal and postnatal depression, and maternal stroking, at the glucocorticoid receptor gene.”


- HPA reactivity is increased via methylation of the Glucocorticoid Receptor (GR) gene: NR3C1
- Increased methylation of NR3C1 in infants of mothers with depression
- Decreased methylation (resulting in less HPA reactivity) seen in infants of mothers who reported increased stroking of their infants
Part III: Parenting: What Works
What works...

Meta-Analyses: Key Parenting Program Components for Disruptive Child Behavior

Patty Leijten, PhD, Frances Gardner, PhD, G.J. Melendez-Torres, PhD, Jolien van Aar, MSc, Judy Hutchings, PhD, Susanne Schulz, MSc, Wendy Knerr, MSc, Geertjan Overbeek, PhD

What works...

1. Positive reinforcement
2. Praise
3. Natural consequences
How might you extend these principles (*praise and positive reinforcement*) to parents and caregivers? And how might doing that improve your classroom?
But you already knew that!
In spite of your workload and challenges, having heard all this information today, what is one thing you will do differently this week?